

Trends and Major Attractions of Tourism in Nepal

Narayan Prasad Paudyal, Ph.D

Associate Professor Department of Geography Education University Campus, Tribhuvan University
Kathmandu, Nepal

ABSTRACT : The present study aims at finding out the trends and major attractions of tourism in Nepal. It is an article which is expected to motivate and attract the visitors who have keen interest once to visit Nepal. Tourism comprises the human activities of moving or travelling from one place to another either within a country or to other countries for pleasure, conference, business, pilgrimage or for other purposes. Tourism history in Nepal goes back to the Lichhavi dynasty when Manjushree a Chinese traveler came to Nepal for the first time. Though the history of tourism is long in Nepal, it got developed since 1950s only. Since then, visitors for various purposes have been visiting Nepal. Nepal has abundance opportunities of flourishing tourism industry which can be the backbone of the country's economy. Nepal, though, is small in area in the world map; it has spellbinding natural beauty, unique cultural heritage, multi-language, multi-ethnicity, multi-religion, conducive climate and tourism friendly environment due to which it has become the ultimate destination for travelling. The trends of tourist arrival entail that the flow of tourists is remarkably increasing every year from all over the worlds mostly for pleasure like trekking, mountaineering, sightseeing, jungle safari etc. Thus, the government of Nepal should make further tourism friendly policy with infrastructure development mainly in remote areas of Nepal so that poverty can be eliminated from the country.

KEY WORDS: Tourism, trend, traveling, community, international, national park, monuments.

I. INTRODUCTION

Tourism is a collection of activities, services, and industries which deliver a travel experience comprising transportation, accommodation, eating and drinking establishments, retail shops, entertainment businesses and other hospitality services provided for individuals or groups traveling away from home (Ugurlu, 2010). The activities such as travelling and staying in places far from their usual community or home that are done by the individual or group, who are called tourists, for either leisure or business is termed as tourism. The person who is supposed to leave his/her hometown in order to visit a different area for the purpose of living an experience of shopping, entertaining, visiting, cultural & historical attractive having fun and so on the condition that she/he should return to his/her own place, stay no longer than 12 months, make use of a tourist activity and spend his/her on money (Ugurlu, 2010). One of the most mushrooming industries in the world is tourism industry. Millions of people throughout the world travel from one place to another each year to travel exotic and new places or get the experience of the world. Tourism has expanded even more with the development of technology providing possibility to reach and explore difficult parts of the world (Basnet, 2016).

The rapid growth of tourism in the world started only after the Second World War. The realization for the need of development in almost all countries, increasing liberalization of foreign exchange and travel restrictions, liberal policy of governments, the aspiration for international brotherhood, etc., are the main factors contributing for the rapid growth of tourism (Shrestha, 1978). Other factors responsible for the enormous growth of international tourism are: availability of leisure time with the people, the rapid growth of population, the advent of Jet travel, the creation of low cost means of transport and communications, low cost hotel and restaurants, retirement age and increasing life expectancy, desire to know and see the unique life styles, traditions and cultures of people of different places, rising standard of living and so on. In the developed countries, tourism agencies are encouraging the people to travel by providing schemes of incentive travel. Agencies also provide credit plans to the people for traveling on installment basis as, "fly now pay later" arrangement (Encyclopedia American, 1976). All these developments have led to the expansion of international tourism movement during the last few decades (Shrestha & Shrestha, 2012). There are different types of tourism based on place or geography of the place throughout the world. Basically, tourism is divided into educational and leisure category. The existing forms of tourism throughout the world are adventure tourism, birth tourism, business tourism, culinary tourism, dark tourism, cultural tourism, disaster tourism, doom tourism, drug tourism, ecotourism, genealogy tourism, LGBT tourism, medical tourism, nautical tourism, religious tourism, sex tourism, slum tourism, space tourism, sports tourism, virtual tourism, war tourism and wellness tourism (Pradhan, 2013).

Among the forms of tourism, adventure tourism, cultural tourism, religious tourism, ecotourism, sports tourism and business tourism are the most common ones which are found in most parts of the world. In context of Nepal, these are the common and important types of tourism.

II. STUDY AREA

Nepal covers an area of 147181 km. stretches maximum 245 and minimum 141 km. north to south and 885 kms. west to east. It lies between latitudes 26° 22' to 31° 27' N and longitudes 80° 4' to 88° 12' E above the equator of the earth. It is topographically divided into three regions the Himalaya to the north, the hills, consisting of the Mahabharat range and the Churiya hills, and the Tarai of the south. Elevations are varied in the country. The highest point is the Mount Everest (8848 m.) in the north and the lowest point is 59 m. from the sea level. The annual average temperature is 23°C and annual average rainfall is 150 mm. Nepal is rich in flora and fauna which has made Nepal unique in the world for its natural beauty. Rare animals like one-horned rhino and birds like Kande Bhyakur are found here. Varied geographical features, unique cultures and traditions, multi-lingual societies, multi- ethnicities and multifarious religions decorate Nepal as a bride during marriage. The reason why tourists are attracted to Nepal can easily be pointed out because of such fascinating and enchanting factors.

Figure 1: Physical Feature of Nepal



III. METHODS AND MATERIALS

This study is based on secondary sources of data. Relevant published and unpublished documents, books and journals for secondary sources of information are used. The analytical part is purely descriptive. Related data are tabulated and are analyzed accordingly. So far as the data are concerned, they are authentic. The main aim of carrying out this study is to see the trends and major attractions of tourism in Nepal along with providing essential information to the visitors who wish to visit Nepal.

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

History of Tourism in Nepal : The history of Nepal related to tourism goes back to the period of Manjushree who came to Nepal from China for the first time (Sharma, 2033). He is said to cut the hill of Chovar to let water flow from Kathmandu to the Tarai region for human settlement in the valley. Another famous visitor, Ashoka, the great king of ancient India, visited Lumbini, the birth place of Lord Buddha and erected the Ashoka pillar there before Lichhavi's dynasty during 400 A.D (Kansakar, 1998 cited in Paudyal, 2016a). The architecture, paintings, sculptures and tremendously built palaces like Kailashkut Bhawan, Mangriha etc. attracted tourist to visit Nepal during Lichhavis period (Sharma, 2033). During Malla dynasty, western people came to Nepal with an aim to spread Christianity. For this purpose, the first visitor from Portugal, Jao-cabral arrived Nepal via Bhutan.

Later on, since 1737 Christians were permitted to settle and spread Christianity in Nepal during the ruling period of King Jaya Praksh Malla (Chhetri & Rayamajhi, 2061). On the other hand, foreign tourists are found to be fascinated by art and culture of Nepal from time immemorial. The Chinese, Tibetan and Indians frequently visited Nepal for religious and business purposes. Similarly, Nepalese traders used to go to Lhasa for trade. After unification of Nepal, tourism flourished with the arrival of Kirk Patrik, a military official, when he published a book "An Account of Kingdom of Nepal". The treaty, on the other hand, Sugauli between Nepal and British East India Company gave a rise to visit Nepal by British Nationalities. Furthermore, the visit of the then Rana Prime Minister Jung Bahadur to Britain in 1850-51 A.D. made Nepal known all over Europe. During that period, several nature lovers like botanists etc had visited Nepal. King George V and the Prince of Wales came to Nepal for hunting tigers in the Tarai forests in 1911 and 1921 respectively (Satyal, 1988).

Despite various developments, the Rana autocracy could not flourish tourism as expected by the people. So, the introduction of democracy in 1950 gave an exercise to rise tourism making Nepal open for foreigners especially with mountain tourism. Hence, 1905s is regarded as the most important period in Nepal's tourism development. During 1950s Mount Annapurna, 8091 m. high and Sagarmatha (Mount Everest), 8848 m. high were successfully ascended by Maurica Herzog and Louis Lachenal from France and Tenzing Norgay Sherpa of Nepal and Sir Edmund Hillary of New Zealand respectively. These successful ascents made Nepal known all over the world for mountaineering activities. After being the member of UNO in 1955, tourism industry began to gradually flourish with the arrival of 100 tourists with Thoman Cook and sons in Nepal. This event made Nepal feel the necessity of systematic tourism management, which resulted in the establishment of the Tourism Development Board in 1957. This board was established under the Department of Industry. But later on, in 1998, the Tourism Board was upgraded to the Department Status, and the Tourism Department came under the Ministry of Construction and Communications and Transport (Shrestha & Shrestha, 2012).

Nepal became the member of International Union of Official Travel Organization (IUOTO), now World Tourism Organization (WTO) in 1959 and Pacific Area Travel Association (PATA) in 1963 (Shrestha & Shrestha, 2012). After being the member of these organizations, the inflow of the tourists increased along with the expansion of hotel accommodations, development of modern banking system, improved transport and communication facilities, increase in the touristic resorts and many others. The statistics of tourist arrival into Nepal began in 1962. Similarly, Tourism Department established information centers in various places like TIA, in Kathmandu, Bhairahawa, Brijunj, Kakarbhitta and Janakpur to facilitate and provide necessary information for the tourists. In 1969, Nepal Tourism Development Committee was established with a member of the royal family along with the representatives of important executing ministries, travel and hotel industries for formulating the tourist policy and to draw a long term development plan.

To create suitable environment for the development of tourism industry, various plans and policies are formulated time and again. Tourism master plan 1972, review of the master plan 1984 and defining of "Tourism Policy" 1995 are some examples of such plans. After the formulation of First Tourism Policy 1995, the government brought next Tourism Policy in 2008 with a view to attract more tourists with the slogan "Visit Nepal Year" or "Nepal Tourism Year" in certain years. Similarly, in the year 2011, the government brought another slogan, "Tourism Year 2011" with a mission to bring one million tourists in the country with a huge publicity in Nepal all over the World.

Major Attractions of Tourism: Nepal is one of the small but richest countries in the world in terms of unique bio-diversity due to unique geographical position and attitude variation. It is also one of the best places to explore its religious cultural and natural diversities. All the regions of the world cannot pride themselves in processing such exceptional high mountains, diversity of terrain and culture, as Nepal, all of which attract the traveler (Herzog, 1997). Recently, the Travel Guide Book of England has enlisted Nepal as the most beautiful country to travel among the ten attractive countries concerning to natural beauty in the world. Colombia is ranked second in this respect. Nepal is regarded the best place for adventure tourism and religious and cultural tourism. Every year, thousands of tourists come to Nepal to fulfill their missions.

Why the foreign tourists choose Nepal to visit are the following reasons:

- a. Natural Attractions
- b. Historical, cultural monuments and temples
- c. Architecture, paintings, sculptures
- d. Language, culture, tradition, ethnicity
- e. Conducive climate

Natural Attractions : Naturally, Nepal is the richest country in the world. Its unique exotic flora and fauna has made the country known all over the world. Rare animals like one horned rhino, red panda are found in Nepal. 10 National Parks, 6 Conservation Areas, and 1 Hunting Reserve are established for the protection of unique and endangered species of flora and fauna which occupy a total area of 34185.52 sq.km (23.23%) including 12 buffer zones (DNPWC, 2011 cited in Paudyal 2016b). Tourists from all over the world come to Nepal to see such rare species. Of the fourteen, above 8000m high mountains, eight lie in Nepal and Mount Everest is the highest one which attracts thousands of visitors every year. The other, such mountains are Kanchanjanga (8586), Lotse (8516), Makalu (8463), Choyu (8201), Dhaulagiri (8167), Manaslu (8163) and Annapurna (8091). Along with the view to climbing the mountains, visitors from different countries come to Nepal to see lakes which are very attractive and heart touching. Among many lakes, Tilicho lake is the one which is located in the highest altitude of 4919 m from the sea level in Manang district. The length of this lake is 4 km and breadth is 1.5km. The other famous lakes are Se-Foksundo, Rara, Gosaikunda, Fewa, Pancha Taal, Bulbule, Ghoda-Ghodi, Indrasarobar, Chho-Rolpa, Nand-Bhauju lake, Satyabati, Khaptad, etc.

Tarai is regarded the good natural environment for wildlife. The visitors can see royal Bengal tiger, swamp deer, musk deer, Krishna saar, blue bull, gharial and crocodile. Similarly endangered birds like babbles and orioles, koels and drongos, peacocks, floricans etc can be seen here along with the rare bird '*Kande Bhyakur*' which is found only in Nepal. Similarly, we can see deer, ghoral, serow, leopard and monkey etc with Nepal's national bird Impegan Pheasant (*Danfe*) in Hilly region. In the Himalayan region, one can find snow leopard, Himalayan thar, blue sheep, wolf, black bears and as such. (Basnet, 2016). Such tremendous natural attractions are utilized variously by the foreign visitors. They can enjoy the following things when they visit Nepal which are as follows:

Rafting : Nepal is popular for white water rafting. Thundering water of Nepal coming from the high mountain glaciers provide unexpected thrills for rafting and emerging oneself in the landscape. The popular rivers for rafting in Nepal are Trishuli, Kaligandaki, Bhotekoshi, Marsyangdi, Karnali and Sunkoshi. Many visitors like to go for rafting only for pleasure.

Trekking and Hiking : Trekking in Nepal is regarded the most popular tourism activities among others. Many trekking routes are trailed among which some are categorized easy, some medium and some hard to trek which are in existence throughout the country. Sometimes the trekking trails are really challenging because of the remoteness of the places. The most popular trekking destinations in Nepal are Everest Base Camp, Manaslu Circuit Trek, Kanchenjunga Base Camp Trek, Upper Mustang, Three Passes, Dhaulagiri Circuit, Annapurna Dhaulagiri Panorama, Annapurna Circuit, Rara Lake, Annapurna Base Camp, Makalu Base Camp, Upper Dolpo and Langtang Valley. (Alex, 2015) Like trekking the next popular activity chosen by the visitors is hiking. Nepal is the place of green valley, gorge, beautiful villages, White Water Rivers, lakes, natural sceneries which attract thousands of tourists on hiking each year. Forests full of varieties of animals, birds, butterflies, insects, reptiles and flowers and trees attract tourists as well. The most popular hiking destinations in Nepal are Nagarkot, Chisapani, Shivapuri, Namo Buddha, Godavari, Amitabha Monastery, Sundarijal, Namo Buddha, Nuwakot, Ghale Gaun, Phulchowki, Manakamana, Kulekhani, Daman, Dakshinkali, Kakani, Dhulikhel. (Dev, 2014)

Jungle Safari : Nepal, which is rich in flora and fauna possess wide variety of species across the country. The different landscape spread from east to west and north to south provides Nepal with the unique wildlife and vegetation. Tarai region is the popular region for jungle safari which has low land tropical jungles. Tourists can enjoy the elephant ride, canoe ride, jeep safari, nature walking, bird watching excursions or quick tours around in the jungle areas where they can find tigers, one-horned rhinos, peacocks, different types of deer, wild boar, wild bison, monkeys, bears, wild elephants, leopards, gharials, crocodiles. They can also find aquatic birds alongside the rivers banks. (Mountain Monarch Climbing and Trekking, 2016)

Paragliding : Paragliding is also one of the popular activities in Nepal. It is mostly enjoyed in Pokhara valley of Nepal. Hundreds of national and international tourists enjoy this adventurous sport each day. Sarangkot is the starting point of gliding which lands on the bank of Fewa lake of Pokhara. Many paragliding companies provide the services on daily basis to the visitors.

Mountaineering : Nepal is uniquely famous for mountaineering one of the adventurous activities for tourists. Each year visitors from different countries try to climb up high mountains some succeed but some fail.

In fact, in order to accomplish their mission of climbing mountains the visitors require a high skill and harsh training and a robust body as well. Either they climb up or descend they get the real pleasure of mountaineering doing this dangerous and adventurous activity. Many unfortunate events occur while attempting such tough tasks. Many mountaineers have lost their lives in doing so. The most popular mountains that most people attempt to climb in Nepal are Mt. Everest, Annapurana, Manaslu, Yala peak, Mera peak, Island peak, Pisang peak.

Bungee Jumping : very year tourists are attracted for this thrilling activity in Nepal. The only two bungee areas in Nepal are in Pokhara and the older and popular one in Tatopani where visitors can do canyoning and tandem swing as well. The area above Bhote Koshi river, over 160 meters is the place for bunji jumping which is thrilling and attractive. One has to drop down from the bridge towards surging river with heart breaking excitement. Next bungee in Nepal is located in Pokhara where one can jump from a tower.

Historical, cultural monuments and Temple: This includes archaeological sites, temples, monasteries, shrines, tombs, buildings, residences, monuments, and places of worship. The Ancient Monument Protection Act 1956 (Prachin Smarak Samrakshan Ain 2013 BS) has defined monuments as “Any temple, monument, house, Devalaya, Shivalaya, muth, monastery, vihar, stoopa etc that is older than 100 years and has historical significance is monument.” The Ancient Monument Protection Act 1956 and Ancient Monument Protection Rules 1990 have provisioned the Department of Archaeology which is the authorized legal entity to protect such monuments. The UN governing body UNESCO identified World Heritage Sites as places that belong to all the people in the world. Nepal also has few monuments inscribed on the World Heritage lists. These heritage sites are amazing man-made wonders. Some of these are over 2500 years old. Since many of these sites inside Kathmandu valley are in close proximity therefore this helps you to view them during a single day. Only three of the sites from Nepal listed in the World Heritage Sites are located outside the capital city. The topmost monuments and the temples which are desired to view by the visitors are Pashupatinath Temple, Swayambhunath Stupa, Buddhanath Stupa, Kathmandu Durbar Square, Patan Durbar Square, Bhaktapur Durbar Square ,Changu Narayan Temple and Lumbini, Manakamana Temple, Baglung Kalika Temple, Pathibhara Temple, Shaileshwary Temple etc.

Language, culture, tradition, ethnicity and religion : Nepal is a colorful garden of four castes and thirty-six sub-castes. Therefore, Nepal is known as a multiethnic and multilingual country. Here 125 castes of people speak 123 languages with enchanting accent, polite voice and fascinating tone. According to population census-2011, Nepal has enlisted ten major languages widely spoken across the country. They are Nepali (44.6 % people speak it), Maithili (11.7%), Bhojpuri (5.98%), Tharu (5.77%), Tamang (5.1%) Newari (3.2%), Bajjika (2.99%), Doteli (2.97%) Magar (2.97%) and Urdu (2. 61%).The official language of Nepal is Nepali. This multilingual status of Nepal has placed Nepal in distinct position on linguistic map of world and established Nepal as fascinating area for linguistic study. Though different languages are spoken in the same locality, Nepali has become a lingua franca of Nepal as it is used in education, administration, communication media, etc. Though there is diversity in terms of language, caste, culture and religion, yet there is unity among people. Religious tolerance can be observed here in people. They do not fight in terms of religion but respect the religions of others and culture as well. Majority of people here are Hindus however other religions exist here. They are Buddhism, Islam, Christianity, Shikhism, Jainism, Kirat and so on. The second popular religion of Nepal is Buddhism it came into existence when Buddha got spiritual enlightenment. Along with the evolution of religions, different cultures, traditions and festivals developed in Nepal. One who once visits Nepal gets astonished with the varieties of cultures. Each religious culture has its own norms and values. Throughout the year people celebrate different festivals multifariously. The major festivals people observe here are Dashain, Tihar, Chhath, Lhosar, Janaipurnima, Christmus, Teej, Eid, Maghi etc. Distinct food items are prepared on different festivals. It is also one of the attractions for tourists. They can take part in such ceremonies and taste the real flavor of distinct cuisines.

The Art and Architecture : Nepalese art undoubtedly has a long history. In fact,Nepalese art is the base of development of tourism industry. It is assumed to be started when Araniko came into existence in this field. He was also cordially invited by the Chinese king of Srong-sten Gampo which became the milestone period for the development of tourism industry. Most of the arts developed in Nepal are based in religious themes i.e. Hinduism and Buddhism. Mainly these two religions influenced Nepalese Art. Visitors in Nepal can even now observe the art of pre- Lichhavi period which existed until 200 A.D., Lichhavi period 200A.D.to 800 A.D. and Malla period 1200A.D. to 1400 A.D.In fact, Nepal's history of Art has been influenced since earliest times by the Newars. They carried their craft and Artistic skill beyond the borders of Nepal to Tibet and China as well.

The renowned Artist and architect, Arniko (1245-1306 A.D.), who came from Patan, worked in Lhasa and Peking on the commission of the emperor of China, Kubilai Khan. Climate: Nepal is the country of diverse physical structure with varieties of climatic regions. The three distinct regions are tarai, hill and mountain ranging from 59 meters to 8848 meters from the sea level. Along with the variation in physical structure, distinct variations in climate one can experience when he/she visits Nepal. The variation can be found in wildlife and vegetation too. Visitors from different physical and climatic regions can visit Nepal. Whatever altitude and climate they prefer it is available in Nepal. If they want to experience the hot climate they can visit the low lands of Nepal, for mild climate, on the other hand, they need to travel the places of hilly region while for cold climate they should go for trekking in mountainous region, where they can observe beautiful panorama of snowcapped peaks. Thus, as their desire they can visit Nepal and observe the tremendously built natural resources, varieties of landscape with distinct climate, unique flora and fauna, colorful cultures, multiple religions, and friendly people in a family environment all over the country. If the visitors want to see real Nepal in the form of paradise they should arrive in the months of September, October and November when they can have the sight of clear skies, fresh air unbelievable natural views with comfortable and safer journey. Once if you visit Nepal , you will promise to come back to this country once again in your life.

Trends of Tourism in Nepal: The beauties of Nepal cannot be explained in words as she is the country of colorful garden decorated with thousands of ornaments like eye-catching natural heritages, fascinating cultures, indomitable world listed cultural heritages, enchanting languages, colorful castes, creeds, cultures and religions. Moreover, she is known all over the world as the motherland of lord Buddha, the messenger of peace, the country of Everest, the highest peak in the world, the sacred land of *Rishies*, and the Hindu kingdom and many more. That's why, recently 'The Travel Guide Of Tourist has declared Nepal the most beautiful country among ten in the world to travel. Such an attractive country, however, was unknown in the world till 1950 i.e. during the ruling period of Rana Government. But with the declaration and advent of democracy in the country in 1950, the tourism industry began to bloom with the arrival of foreign visitors since the door of tourism became open for tourists. Therefore, 1950s is considered as the most vital era in the development of tourism industry. Much development occurred along with the introduction of the First Fifth Year Plan-1957. Tourism Development Board was established in this year with historic contribution since then Nepal has been able to entice tourists in the country and increase their flow significantly. Time and again, Nepal has invited thousands of tourists from all over the world to visit the country along with enchanting slogans like Visit Nepal 1998 and 2011 and the coming year 2019 is also declared the visit year with the aim of increasing the number of tourists up to 10,0000. Rational Growth can be seen in the number of tourists visiting Nepal since last five decades. Tourism industry began with the arrival of 6,179 tourists in the year 1962 which increased up to 602867 in the year 2010. The Department of Tourism started the record of tourist arrival in Nepal since 1962. The trends of tourist arrival in the significant years 2010 to 2016 can be interpreted as shown in the following Table 1.

Table 1: Number of Tourists Arrival in Nepal 2010-2016

Month	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
January	33645	42622	52501	47846	70196	38616	42235
February	49264	56339	66459	67264	69009	58523	60821
March	63058	67565	89151	88697	79914	79187	76444
April	45509	59751	69796	65152	80053	65729	60214
May	32542	46202	50317	52834	62558	17569	46683
June	33263	46115	53630	54599	50731	18368	38852
July	38991	42661	49995	54011	46546	22967	48115
August	54672	71398	71964	68478	59761	38606	66341
September	54848	63033	66383	66755	52894	39050	74670
October	79130	96996	86379	99426	80993	56584	89281
November	67537	83460	83173	75485	76305	58304	72990
December	50408	60073	63344	57069	61158	45467	76356
Total	602867	736215	803092	797616	790118	538970	753002

Source: CBS, 2017

Table 1 represents the number of tourists arriving in Nepal since 2010 to 2016. It clearly depicts that the flow of tourists is uneven and fluctuating in different years even it is disproportionate in twelve months of the same year.

Their flow is determined by the climate, natural disaster, unusual event and the environment of the country along with the policy of the government as well. Tourists prefer sound climate and environment to visit the country. The statistics undoubtedly indicates that the largest number of tourists visited Nepal in the year 2012 of the five years. That is to say, 803092 tourists visited Nepal in this year. There was continuous increase in tourist arrivals in the country in the years 2010, 2011 and 2012 respectively. However, there was slight decrease after 2012 to 2015. But an increase in tourist flow could be seen in the year 2016 compared to 2015.

Table 2: Tourist Arrivals by Sex and Age, 2010-2016

Item	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
A. Sex							
Male	361611	352059	439270	449058	445627	289158	399091
Female	241256	384156	363822	348558	344491	249813	353911
Total	602867	736215	803092	797616	790118	538970	753002
B. Age Group (Years)							
01-15	41156	32795	35468	46262	50441	19614	29825
16-30	120395	171081	181558	190630	185685	123444	154960
31-45	189852	212176	231117	237690	235738	157416	218479
46-60	172800	177983	201835	195416	183582	129614	199139
61 and over	64593	82726	109239	115654	106666	74518	130627
Not specified	14071	59454	43875	11964	28006	34365	19972
Total	602867	736215	803092	797616	790118	538971	753002

Source: CBS, 2017

There is not remarkable difference in the arrival of tourists in terms of sex. The tourist arrival statistics 2010 entails that of the total visitors, the number of male tourists was about 60 percent whereas 40 percent was female population. But the data is reverse in the year 2011 in this year the ratio of male and female tourists' arrivals in Nepal was 47.82 and 52.18 percent respectively of the total arrivals. But there was a decrease in the flow of female tourists in the year 2016. It decreased by 5.18 percent. It clearly reveals that there is a need of creating and developing appropriate environment and products to attract female visitors. While observing the age group of tourist arrival, the highest share was occupied by the age group of 31-45 and 46-60 age group secured second position while 16- 30 ranked third in this respect. The position of these age groups did not remain stable in all years which is a clear evident in the year 2014 when 16-30 age group secured second position which was in third position in previous years pushing the 46-60 age group in its position. The Table 2 shows it in detail.

Table 3: Number of Tourists by Nationality, 2010-2016

Nationality	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Australia	16243	19824	22030	20469	24516	14816	25507
Austria	3389	3998	3797	3131	3320	NA	NA
Canada	9322	11404	13507	12132	11610	6495	12491
China	46360	61917	71861	113173	123805	64675	104005
Denmark	4359	6138	7118	5320	5150	NA	4082
France	24550	26720	28805	21842	24097	10885	20863
Germany	22583	27472	30409	22263	18028	12216	23812
India	120898	149504	165815	180974	135343	75124	118249
Italy	10226	12621	14614	9974	10347	3972	9911
Japan	23332	26283	28642	26694	25829	14465	22979
Netherland	13471	16836	15445	10516	12320	4324	11453
Spain	13712	16037	14549	10412	13110	4307	12255
Switzerland	5320	11020	7046	4903	6447	NA	NA

Srilanka	45531	59884	69476	32736	37546	43117	57521
U.S.A.	36425	42875	48985	47355	49830	53897	53645
U.K.	35091	39091	41294	35668	36759	204469	46295
Others	168590	179158	214638	154898	252061	26208	229934
Non specified	3465	25433	5061	85156	NA	NA	NA
Total	602867	736215	803092	797616	790118	538970	753002
Percent Change	18.22	22.12	9.08	-0.68	-0.94	-31.79	39.71

Source: CBS, 2017

Tourist arrivals by nationality in Nepal shown in Table 3 indicates that the largest number of tourists coming to Nepal is from India, China, Srilanka, Japan, Italy, Spain, France, U.K., U.S.A, Denmark, Australia etc. The data obviously depicts that mostly Asian tourist visit Nepal. India ranks first in this respect which has an increasing trend of visiting Nepal for various purposes. The data clearly reveals that there was an increase of tourists' flow to Nepal from India since 2010 to 2013 but there was a continuous decrease in the number in the year 2014 and 2015 however in the year 2016 the number rose slightly up. China being the second neighboring country holds second position to visit Nepal after India. It has the same trend of visiting Nepal like India. On the other hand, Srilanka, U.S.A and U.K. have third, fourth and fifth positions respectively in this respect.

Table 4: Tourist Arrivals by Mode of Transportation and Gross Earnings, 2010-2016

Year	Total Number	Annual Change (in Percent)	By Air		By Land		Gross Foreign Exchange Earnings (in '000 US \$)
			Number	Percent of Total	Number	Percent of Total	
2010	602867	18.22	448800	74.4	154067	25.6	379,022
2011	736215	22.1	545221	74.1	190994	25.9	341,485
2012	803092	9.1	598258	74.5	204834	25.5	380,374
2013	797616	-0.7	594848	74.6	202768	25.4	390,264
2014	790118	-0.9	586981	74.3	204137	25.8	471,769
2015	538970	0.32	407412	75.6	131558	24.4	544,100
2016	753002	40	572563	41	180439	37	392,700

Source: CBS, 2017

Transportation either air or land plays a vital role to attract tourists in the nation. Most of the tourists- more than 75 percent have visited Nepal via air and rest 25 percent by road transportation. Financially, tourism industry occupies about 3.6 percent of the country's total budget. The above (Table 4) data reveals that the highest income from tourism was in the year 2015 in comparison to other years. However, the income decreased in 2016 as compared to 2014 and 2015.

Table 5: Tourist Arrivals by Purpose of Visit, 2010-2016

Purpose of Visit	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Holiday Pleasure	263938	425721	379627	410934	395849	386065	489452
Trekking and	70218	86260	105015	102001	97185	9162	66490
Mountaineering Business	21377	17859	24785	28183	24494	20876	24322
Pilgrimage	101335	63783	109854	71610	98765	14996	82830
Official	26374	24054	30460	37386	32395	21479	21310
Convention/Conference	9627	10836	13646	15552	13432	9038	12801
Others	52347	37311	48540	54326	53728	77354	55797
Not specified	57651	70391	91165	77623	74270	-	-
Total	602867	736215	803092	797615	790118	538970	753002

Source: CBS, 2017

Tourists visit Nepal for various purposes. Major of them are holiday pleasure, trekking and mountaineering, business, pilgrimage, official convention and conference. Among these, holiday pleasure is the main purpose.

According to the tourist arrival data of 2016 most of the visitors came to Nepal for this motive. And the pilgrimage purpose comes in the second position while trekking and mountaineering occupies the third one. As Nepal is the land of tremendous natural resources and cultural heritage, many tourists desire to visit this country but Nepal still lacks required facilities for the tourists. That's why, the development of all the aspects needed for tourism like accommodation, transportation, security, trekking guides etc. should be taken into consideration only then Nepal can reach towards its destination or will be able to fulfill its mission of making tourism industry the backbone of country i.e. the one and the only source of country's economy.

V. CONCLUSION

Tourism has a long history in Nepal however before 1950 its development was in a slow pace as the Rana rulers did not pay much attention to flourish it. Tourism industry really has begun to catch its pace since 1950. The flow of tourists visiting Nepal increased after the formation of Tourism Development Board. Later on Nepal Tourism Board 1998 actively started its works for luring tourists at large with enchanting slogans to visit Nepal along with the development of essential infrastructure for tourism. Nepal has the abundance sources of attractions with conducive climate and environment so tourism industry can be the one and only source of income for alleviation of poverty in Nepal. Time and again the government has formulated suitable policy and plans for the attraction of tourists so the arrival of tourists in Nepal is in ascending ratio. Every year the number of tourists entering Nepal from all over the world is significantly increasing despite decrease in some years. Still Nepal has to do a lot for the utilization of available resources properly and beneficially with required facilities along with the dynamic and tourism friendly plans and policy and the joint venture of the government and the private sector as well.

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Narayan Prasad Paudyal, Trends and Major Attractions of Tourism in Nepal. Invention Journal of Research Technology in Engineering & Management (IJRTEM), 2(9), 51-59. Retrieved September 14, 2018, from www.ijrtem.com.